

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 4, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 40

Introduced by Assembly Member Solorio

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Bonilla, Bradford, Brownley, Buchanan, Butler, Charles Calderon, Campos, Carter, Cedillo, Conway, Cook, Davis, Dickinson, Donnelly, Eng, Feuer, Fletcher, Fong, Fuentes, Furutani, Galgiani, Garrick, Gatto, Gordon, Grove, Hagman, Halderman, Hall, Harkey, Hayashi, Roger Hernández, Hill, Huber, Hueso, Huffman, Jeffries, Jones, Lara, Logue, Bonnie Lowenthal, Ma, Mansoor, Mendoza, Miller, Mitchell, Monning, Morrell, Nestande, Nielsen, Olsen, Pan, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Silva, Swanson, Torres, Valadao, Wagner, Wieckowski, Williams, and Yamada)

(Principal coauthor: Senator Correa)

March 21, 2011

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 40—Relative to Vietnamese American history.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 40, as amended, Solorio. Vietnamese American history.

This measure would recognize April 24, 2011, to April 30, 2011, inclusive, as Black April Memorial Week, and April 2011 as Vietnamese American month.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, April 30, 2011, marks the 36th anniversary of the
- 2 end of the Vietnam War and the start of the eventual exodus of

1 several million Vietnamese out of Vietnam after South Vietnam's
2 capital of Saigon fell to the communists on April 30, 1975; and

3 WHEREAS, For many Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who
4 were directly involved in the war and Vietnamese Americans who
5 have settled in the United States, the Vietnam War was a tragedy
6 full of great suffering and the loss of American, Vietnamese, and
7 Southeast Asian lives; and

8 WHEREAS, 58,169 people were killed and 304,000 were
9 wounded out of the 2.59 million people who served in the Vietnam
10 War so that one out of every ten Americans who served in Vietnam
11 became a casualty of war; and

12 WHEREAS, During the American evacuation of Saigon, the
13 first wave of Vietnamese refugees, 135,000 strong, mostly military
14 officers and their families, took temporary shelter through several
15 international refugee camps, and at Camp Pendleton in San Diego,
16 Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, and Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Starting in 1977, and lasting through the
19 mid-1980s, a second wave of Vietnamese refugees comprised
20 mostly of "boat people" began leaving Vietnam; and

21 WHEREAS, Seeing no future under communism, nearly 800,000
22 boat people risked their lives in small, dangerous boats to travel
23 to resettlement camps in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia,
24 Thailand, and the Philippines before eventually being resettled in
25 the United States; and

26 WHEREAS, The Red Cross estimated that during that time, at
27 least 300,000 Vietnamese died on the high seas while trying to
28 escape communism; and

29 WHEREAS, After 1985, a third wave of Vietnamese refugees
30 came to the United States under the Orderly Department Program;
31 and

32 WHEREAS, In 1988, Congress passed the Operation
33 Homecoming Act, a program allowing approximately 80,000
34 Amerasian children (offspring of GI fathers and Vietnamese
35 mothers) to come to America; and

36 WHEREAS, By 1990, the fourth wave of Vietnamese refugees
37 began arriving in the United States under the Humanitarian
38 Operation, and today, more than 1.7 million Vietnamese
39 immigrants reside in the United States; and

1 WHEREAS, Studies using census data show that foreign-born
2 Vietnamese entering the United States in the 1980s, 1990s, and
3 2000 to 2005, inclusive, have seen an increase in terms of English
4 proficiency, proportion of college graduates, the number of
5 owner-occupied housing, family median income, and
6 naturalization; and

7 WHEREAS, Over the years, Vietnamese immigrants have
8 overcome social, economic, and language barriers of unforeseen
9 magnitude to grow and become the most assimilated along civic
10 dimensions of any large group in America; and

11 WHEREAS, Through emphasis on intense study, Vietnamese
12 Americans have reached the pinnacles of American success in a
13 variety of fields, including business and entrepreneurship, science
14 and technology, space travel, medicine, the executive branch of
15 the United States government, politics, the United States military,
16 the United States judicial system, professional sports, and most
17 recently, cultural icon status in cooking, modeling, acting, and
18 comedy; and

19 WHEREAS, In order to serve their community and prosper in
20 America, Vietnamese Americans formed well-established and
21 thriving Vietnamese American commercial districts throughout
22 the United States and California, including enclaves in Oakland,
23 Orange County, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San
24 Jose; and

25 WHEREAS, More than 450,000 Vietnamese now live in
26 California, with the largest concentration of Vietnamese found
27 outside of Vietnam residing in Orange County, particularly in the
28 cities of Garden Grove, Santa Ana, Westminster, and Fountain
29 Valley; and

30 WHEREAS, San Jose, with a population of 900,000, has the
31 largest concentration of Vietnamese of any American city,
32 estimated at 10 percent of the city's population; and

33 WHEREAS, In 2006, the U.S. Census Bureau survey of business
34 owners reported that there are 50,321 Vietnamese businesses in
35 California; and

36 WHEREAS, As we must teach our children and future
37 generations important lessons from the Vietnam War, including
38 how the plight of the Vietnamese refugees following the end of
39 war serves as a powerful example of the values of freedom and
40 democracy; and

1 WHEREAS, Refugees and immigrants from the former Republic
2 of Vietnam who came to the United States and settled as free
3 Vietnamese Americans are honored and remembered for their
4 sacrifices for freedom and human rights and for their ongoing
5 contributions to our democratic society; and

6 WHEREAS, An executive order issued by Governor Arnold
7 Schwarzenegger honors the contributions of the Vietnamese
8 American community to the State of California and recognizes
9 their love for democracy, justice, and tolerance, upon which the
10 symbol of the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag was
11 established; and

12 WHEREAS, The Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag,
13 yellow, with three horizontal red stripes, is the only symbol that
14 can unite most Vietnamese around the world and bring them
15 together under the banner that symbolizes the aspiration for
16 freedom and democracy in their homeland; and

17 WHEREAS, Although also united in sorrow as they
18 commemorate April 30, 2011, as Black April, an occasion to reflect
19 on the sacrifices of the past, Vietnamese American communities
20 throughout California consider Black April a celebration of the
21 resilience of the Vietnamese people; now, therefore, be it

22 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
23 *thereof concurring*, That in recognition of the great tragedy and
24 suffering and lives lost during the Vietnam War era, the week of
25 April 24, 2011, to April 30, 2011, inclusive, shall be proclaimed
26 Black April Memorial Week, a special time for Californians to
27 remember the countless lives lost during the Vietnam War era,
28 and to hope for a more humane and just life for the people of
29 Vietnam; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That, to honor a community that has added so much
31 personal, cultural, and economic value to the social fabric of the
32 great State of California, which embraces ethnic and cultural
33 diversity, the month of April 2011 be recognized as Vietnamese
34 American Month.

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